

Normally Strange by LovelySheree

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Summary: Yeah, they live a pretty weird life, but they're use to it. It's normally strange for them, and they're perfectly fine with that. A series of one-shots full of fluff and fun! (Typically set after season 2) (Recent Updates in celebration of MILEVEN week!)

1. Chapter 1 (What should be A)

Edit: Yes, this is an ABC one-shot series, but I decided to do that *after* I posted this. So, this chapter has nothing to do with the prompt and the next chapter is "B" so... I'll just give this chapter a BS title like... "Affection" or something.

Hawkins Indiana 1987...

Jane Hopper, El, was indisputably attractive. Not only in her looks, but in her overall demeanor. Her overall way about her. She had this incredibly sharp and honest wit that came from a kind of natural intelligence and yet a level of innocence that was endearing. Her hips, softly curved, would pop out to the side in moments of clever, verbal delivery; a quirked brow bent above chocolate-brown eyes. In those moments, Mike knew he was so helplessly in love.

However, at this exact moment, he knew he was so helplessly envious.

He watched her from across the hall, acting busy by digging a blind hand through his high school locker. She stood, hip popped, arms crossed, and brow quirked, talking to another guy. But not just *any* guy. *The* number one guy at Hawkins High. Rick.

Rick leaned against his locker with his letterman jacket hanging loosely on his shoulders. During their conversation, (that seemed to be lasting forever to Mike) Rick continuously swiped his hair out of his face—something, apparently, almost all girls found him attractive for doing. Mike tested it once for himself, however his results were nothing more than embarrassing. He didn't think Lucas and Dustin would ever let him live it down.

At last, Rick's mouth stopped moving. *Finally finished talking about himself*, Mike ruefully thought. It was followed by a shrug from El's shoulders. Rick started talking again. Mike's frown deepened.

"You're not fooling anyone," a voice suddenly spoke up from behind

him.

Mike jumped, turning to find Will Byers looking at him in exasperation. "I—I was just zoned out," Mike mumbled.

"In quite the convenient direction, too," Will said flatly.

"Why's she talking to him for so long?" Mike asked, giving up his meager charade.

Will shrugged, "Rick's good at talking about himself, he could probably go on for hours."

Suddenly El turned around, leaving a surprised—but still playing it cool—Rick. Her eyes met Mike's from across the hall as she made her way towards the two boys. She simply walked up without speaking a word and held Mike's stare for a few moments, then opened her locker next to Mike's.

That's how they greeted each other at times. Will had found it odd at first, but now only finds it stupid after hearing El say, "Eyes hold a thousand hellos." Perhaps she had watched one too many soaps growing up, he thought absently.

"Mike," El said as she put her books into her locker and shut it. "Would you do me the sweetest of favors?" she asked without looking at him.

"U-um, sure. But what is it?" he asked as she turned to look at him. For a moment he thought he was in trouble.

"Would you kiss me?" she said rather simply.

Mike's eyebrows shot up, that wasn't what he expected. "Okay, not that I'm opposed, but why?" he asked, almost forgetting about his jealousy.

"I'll tell you after," she smiled, already creeping towards him.

He grinned, leaning down and touching his nose to hers, closing his eyes and taking a deep breath, "Anything for you," he said softly, kissing her.

He had planned for it to be short and simple since they both avoided P.D.A for numerous reasons, but before he could pull away, her arms had found their way up and around his neck as she leaned up on her tiptoes, keeping him there and furthering their kiss.

"You know, this is making me incredibly uncomfortable," Will spoke up awkwardly, "My sister should not be sucking faces with my friend right in front of me, thank you very much."

They pulled apart and El kissed Mike's cheek, whispering "Thank you," into his ear.

Just as she stepped back, Rick walked past the both of them, slapping Mike on the shoulder, "Okay, okay, I get it," he mumbled as he brushed past them.

Mike watched his retreating figure curiously, "What was that about?"

El leaned into Mike's arm, "He didn't know I already had a boyfriend," she said.

The dots connected in Mike's mind and he turned to her with a frown, "Did he try to ask you out?" he asked.

"He was going to," she said while smiling up at him, "Don't worry, I like you better."

"Jeez, does no one know we're dating?" Mike wondered aloud, glancing around and catching a few perplexed glances their way from the hoard of kids in the hall.

Will shrugged, "Considering you don't often show P.D.A in this overly P.D.A-minded school, probably not."

Mike looked determinedly at his girlfriend, "We should kiss more," he decided.

El's face lit up, leaning up to give him a quick kiss. "Okay," she agreed.

Will sighed, "It's not like you could just hold hands or something..." When they kissed again, he looked away, scrunching his face. "I'm not

okay with this."

Within no time, everyone was talking about the power-couple in Hawkins High's senior year class, Mike Wheeler and Jane Hopper.

No, this doesn't mean I'm finished writing Stranger Things in Stranger Times, but I figured a one-shot series would be a good creative outlet so, here I am doing this. Hope you don't mind and enjoy. :)

2. B

I've decided to make this one-shot thing an ABC prompt. Partly because I've never done it, and also because it makes writing challenging yet easier. So, yup. I hope you all enjoy and don't mind my changing it up.

Belligerent: Hostile, aggressive or argumentative.

El, although quieter than most, introverted, and shy, had a powerful personality. Both literally and figuratively. Yes, she had *actual* powers, but she was also a powerful person in general. She truly stood her ground with all her might. She was not easily swayed in her beliefs and she found herself being naturally against something.

And that isn't to say she argued about everything—she argued about very little, as a matter of fact—but she never found herself fully agreeing with someone simply for the sake of peace. Mike said she played "devil's advocate" very well. Although she was offended to hear that at first, once he explained what it meant, she understood.

And it was true. She could often see the "bigger picture" or both sides of an argument. Unless a dispute was strictly personal, El often found herself thinking of both sides. If something was said as an absolute, she would simply point out another loop-hole. She never meant any harm out of it, and as she grew older and gained social-skills, this lead her to become quite witty and sassy in a strange, sophisticated way.

The party, of course, welcomed this side of El with wide-open arms. Dustin and Max found it both competing and exciting to see El get sassy. The three of them could be seen throwing verbal banter at one another throughout the day, and El, in the quiet confidence she began to grow into, seemed to always know *just* what to say. But due to Hopper's lectures of social norms and the importance of manners, this was a side of El that very few knew. Although, not many people knew El. Not really, at least. They knew Jane Hopper.

Jane was sweet. Jane was shy. Jane was pretty. And although these

were traits that El carried, she was much more. El was sweet *and* sassy. El was shy *and* bold. El was pretty *and* hot. So when sweet, shy, and pretty Jane (El) Hopper bumped into the Hawkins High Douchebag of the Year, everyone in the hallway froze. It was like watching something in slow-motion and no one could look away, their eyes glued to the scene before them.

"Oh—! Sorry!" El spoke quickly, not bothering to look up from her fallen papers she was picking up off the ground.

"Watch it," Douchebag of the Year (otherwise known as Ronny) huffed out, looking down to find sweet Jane Hopper picking up her papers and he had *quite* the view. He whistled, bending down next to her, "You sure you didn't bump into me on purpose? You sure are taking your time picking up those papers... not that I mind."

El looked up at him with a frown, picking up the last paper and standing up. "You sure you were born on purpose? Or did you dad think that when your mom bumped into him in a crowded hallway, it was a *for sure* sign that they should totally bang and then you came along 9 months later." El *knew* this was *not* the right thing to say. But at the moment, she was dead-tired and full of stress. She had a paper due, an exam to study for, and Hopper was out of town which meant she had to walk to school. (At least they lived closer, now that they weren't living in that old cabin.)

"Bitch," Ronny scoffed, standing up and hovering over her, "What'd you say?"

El didn't like Ronny much. Not a lot of people liked Ronny much. He was stupid. A mouth breather. So the usual filter that El lived through didn't seem to apply to him. Especially when she's this tired. "Don't worry about it," she smiles all-too-sweetly. "I was a mistake too, but at least I grew out of it," she said simply, walking past him.

The entire hallway erupted into a chaotic mess of cheers and laughter and shocked gasps while Ronny's voice strained to yell over the noise while he spit out names and other lame insults. El looked up and noticed a familiar face in the crowd. There stood Max, leaning against a wall of lockers, clapping slowly and dramatically for her.

El's face heated up, "I shouldn't have said that," she said honestly when she came closer to Max.

"Don't be ridiculous, that was perfect!" Max laughed, pointing at Ronny who's head was about to explode. "I mean, look at him! He's gonna blow a gasket! If you didn't have super-powers, I'd be scared for your safety, but you do so I'm just finding this hilarious."

"It wasn't nice," El said pinching her nose, "Jeez, I just can't stand him, though. I'm sad to say I only half-regret it."

Max let out a bark of laughter and looked at El strangely. "How can you be so nice that you honestly feel bad for insulting a dick like Ronny?" Max questioned, "Come on, El, bask in this moment of glory."

They continued to talk as they walked to class, the occasional pats on the back or words of admiration were thrown El's way and the guilt slowly began to fade away into satisfaction.

I hope I didn't make El *too* OOC, you know? But I truly see her standing up for herself in a sassy way-just look at how she interacts with strangers, like what? She's super sassy! That being said, I wanted to embrace her shy and sweet sides as well. So, there you have it, a very interesting (but not so interesting) one-shot.

Hope you enjoyed!

LovelySheree

3. C

"C" is for crazy!

Crazy: senseless; impractical; totally unsound.

Occasionally they would wander around the woods together. It had become a thing of theirs—just something they did. And when the days were nice, like today, they would linger a bit longer; slowing their footsteps and letting their arms, intertwined, swing back and fourth between them.

It all started when Mike had first found his way to the secluded cabin where Eleven was safely hidden. El, bored of being cooped up inside, asked Hopper if they could go outside one day. With a huff and a gruff response, he allowed for them to walk around the cabin (but closely and never for too long).

From that point on, it had quickly become their favorite thing to do. And the day was perfect today. It was in-between winter and spring and it was one of those randomly sunny and cheerful days. There was a light breeze, no clouds, and it was cool enough to wear a jacket yet warm enough to not.

"How are your applications going?" El suddenly asked, breaking the silence between them. "That's all Will seems to be talking about lately," she laughed lightly. "He says there's an art school that specializes in comics and cartoons that he's interested in... I can't remember what it's called, I think it starts with a 'K?'"

"Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic art. He mentioned it to me a few days ago," Mike smiled down at her, "You know Superman and Batman and Wonder Woman?" he asked her, throwing out a few popular DC names.

El nodded, "Of course. I think Dustin nearly drowned me in comics when I had first come back."

Mike laughed, "Sounds like something he'd do. But the school—"

Kubert—the founder of the school was Joe Kubert. He illustrated some of the DC comics. I think he made a few of his own too, but I'm not sure."

"I hope Will can make comics," El said with a broad smile, "I always like looking at his drawings."

"Yeah, he's pretty good," Mike agreed, then silence fell between them again. They continued to slowly meander around the woods, their hands swinging while they occasionally squeezed the other's hand.

"You didn't answer my question," El realized suddenly, looking up at him.

Mike looked down at her, his eyebrows raised, "What do you mean?"

"I asked how your applications were going," El clarified.

"Oh," Mike shrugged, "Good, I guess."

"You guess?" El peered at him from the side of her eyes.

Mike sighed, running his free hand through his hair. It had gotten slightly curlier over the years, so a few curls bounced back over his forehead as his hand fell away from his face. "It's just stressful, you know? What we've got here is good. With Will, Dustin, Lucas and Max," he looked to El, "With you and me. I just don't want to leave it."

El nodded, "Yeah," she said lowly, quietly, as if her voice would break something. "Hop says that college kids always leave and come back eventually. At least, in a small town like this they do."

"He's probably right," Mike said, "But even if he is, college is four years, and that's if you do it right. Not to mention *grad* school if you plan to go farther."

A cold air seemed to settle between them. As if whatever peaceful moment they had been having was broken by the reality of the coming years. El found herself squeezing Mike's hand and their swinging motion stopped. They continued to walk, but all El could focus on were the sound of the crunching leaves beneath their feet.

"We'll be fine," El sternly spoke, as if she was trying to convince herself and not only Mike.

"I could barely handle a year without you," Mike said quietly. He turned to her, stopping her in her steps. "You're right, we'll be okay. But it's just... it's gonna suck," he said, pulling her closer to him so that he could wrap his arms round the small of her back, leaning over and letting his head fall into the crook of her neck. He stayed, craned like this, until he felt El's soft hands reach for his face as she pulled him back to look him in the eyes.

"But I'll be able to visit you," she smiled widely, "And not just in my own mind," she clarified.

Mike laughed lightly, "Right. Yeah, it won't be a solid four years—there'll be breaks and whatever too."

"And who knows *what* the future holds," El ran her thumbs across his cheekbones, tracing Mike's freckled face.

Mike leaned forward and kissed her, leaning as far into her as he could without causing them to both tumble over. Taking a deep breath through his nose, he pulled back, watching as her eyes fluttered open. "I want to *know*, though," he said softly.

She frowned in confusion at him, "Know what?"

"What the future holds. I want to *know*. I want what I envision to happen," he explained.

"I thought you didn't have much of a vision," El said, leaning into him and letting her head rest on his chest. "That you weren't totally sure what you wanted to do," she added.

She could suddenly hear Mike's heartbeat pick up. She could practically feel it against her ear. "Well," he said shakily, "I mean, career-wise, yeah. I'm not totally sure... but like, there's other stuff to life I'm pretty sure about," he said vaguely.

El hummed contently, squeezing him tighter in their simple embrace. "Like what?" she asked curiously, trying to ignore Mike's racing heart.

"Um, well... like... like *you*. You and me. You know, in life and all," he said rather lamely.

El huffed out a laugh, letting go of Mike and taking a step back to get a good look at him. "In life and all,' yeah. Very specific."

He frowned at her, "You know what I mean."

"If you're saying that we should continue dating, then yes. But I don't know why you need to *say* that," El shook her head, reaching to grab his hand, but Mike stopped her.

He grabbed her wrist swiftly, then slid his hand into hers, looking her in the eyes. "I love you," he said sincerely.

Thrown off by his serious attitude, El looked at him under a confused stare. "I know," she said slowly, "And I love you too." She didn't get what he was trying to say. Or if he was trying to say anything at all. They had said they loved each other countless times by now, so why did it suddenly feel like there was something else under the surface of his words?

Suddenly, Mike's eyes lit up. "I can't believe I hadn't thought about this before. It seems so simple now," Mike said under his breath, looking at El with such admiration that it almost made her fumble backwards.

"Care to let me in on your epiphany?" she asked.

"Nice word," Mike complimented her.

"Don't change the subject, Mike. Answer my question," she crossed her arms, pulling her hand from his grasp.

"Let's get married," he blurted out.

This time, El actually *did* take a step back. "Mike, we're in our senior year of high school, I thought *I* was the one who was a little out of it on social norms."

"Is that a no?" Mike asked, slightly dejected.

"Well I—No, it's not a no. But..." El looked at him, truly looked at him. She remembered all of the times that they'd been there for each other. Through fights, through pointless drama, through messed-up family shit. She sighed, giving him a lopsided smile.

"So let's get married," he tried again, reaching for her hands and gripping them in his own. His long and slender fingers wrapping around her small delicate ones with such ease.

She leaned forward, kissing him again. He brought her hands tightly to his chest as he leaned forward to kiss her more. Mouth parted, hearts opened, they stayed, letting the kiss linger. She pulled away, running her thumbs along his freckles again.

"Is that a yes?" Mike asked hopefully.

"It's a *maybe*. A yes for someday, but a maybe for now," she said, continuing to smile up at him.

"Why not now?" he asked, almost whining.

"Mike, I'm afraid getting married doesn't solve the problem of college and being away from each other," she laughed lightly.

"Yeah, I guess. But at least..." he looked away, averting his eyes. "Can I at least buy you a ring?"

She gave him a peck on the lips, going back to hugging him. "Rings are expensive," she warned.

"So? I've been saving up," he shrugged, hugging her back.

El moved her head so that her chin was propped up on his chest and she was looking up at him. He scrunched his neck to look down at her. "You've been saving up? For a ring?" she asked.

"I mean, yeah. I didn't think about getting married so soon until a moment ago, but I've been saving up since you came back," he said, suddenly embarrassed.

"Mike, I came back when we were thirteen," she raised her eyebrows at him.

"So?" he said, looking away. He could feel the blush creeping up his neck.

El smiled helplessly at him, watching him almost squirm under her stare. "You're crazy," she said, burying her head into his chest.

"And you're amazing," he said back, kissing her head.

This was inspired by the song, "Lets Get Married" by the Bleachers. If you don't know who they are, they're amazing! They've got a modern 80s vibe that's amazing for Stranger Things. Their second album is bomb and so is there first. You should give them a listen!

Hope you enjoyed,

LovelySheree

4. D

This chapter ended up being a bit longer than I anticipated... Oh well, I think it's cute.

Short Summery: Mike and El's son asks his dad why he was given the name "Sam."

Dorsa, Sam: one the three brothers who created the Eggo Waffle.

Mike didn't expect to be having this conversation with his son. Then again, he *should've* expected it. It's a common topic, and typically it's not an embarrassing one, either. Typically. But this family didn't fall under "typically" very often.

They were sitting at the kitchen table, Mike drinking a cup of coffee while his son, Sam, was munching on an Eggo. It was fitting how he seemed to inherit El's love for Eggos. I mean, Mike wasn't against Eggos at all. In fact, he's always enjoyed them. But... El almost had some kind of love affair with them, much to Mike's despair. Never, in all his life, did he think he'd be jealous of a frozen waffle.

"Dad?" Same voice brought Mike out of his daze.

"Sorry, what did you ask?" Mike was stalling, he knew very well what Sam had asked.

Sam shrugged, nonchalantly. El said Sam looked so much like Mike when he did that. "I asked," Sam finished chewing his waffle, "Why you and mom named me 'Sam.' Is there any reason for it?"

"Not... particularly," Mike said slowly, putting his coffee down with a sigh. "I can't quite remember," he lied. He knew why they named their son "Sam," because of *course* he did. He's his father. But the truth was slightly embarrassing. "We really liked the name," he said simply.

Sam gave him a pointed look. "Dad, friends don't lie," he said in an all too familiar tone. It was strange having a kid sometimes, Mike

thought. Because you'd see bits of yourself, or bits of your spouse, or bits of your kid being completely original to themselves. However, in this moment, Mike was hit with a heavy wave of nostalgia in his son's sentence.

"You sound like your mother," he mused allowed.

"Well, you've always said Mom's a smart woman," Sam pointed out. "Now answer the question, why'd you and Mom name me 'Sam?'"

Mike held his breath, wondering if somehow this moment would pass without him having to suffer through it. Sam continued to stare back at him expectantly, so with a heavy exhale, he complied. "You know how your mother loves Eggos?" Mike asked. Sam nodded. "Well, she loves them *so* much, that she named *you* after one of the founders of Eggo Waffles," Mike finished rather lamely.

Sam nearly choked on his food, "W-what? Serious?"

"Yeah, Sam Dorsa was one of the proud creators of Eggo Waffles in San Jose, California, 1953," Mike nodded.

"Wow, that's quite the random trivia statement," Sam laughed, "How do you know all that off the top of your head?"

"I'd be stupid for not knowing who you're named after—plus your mom did a research paper on Eggos in high school that I still have drilled into my brain for some reason." Mike laughed, leaning over and snatching some of Sam's waffle.

"So I'm named after a frozen waffle creator?" Sam asked, mildly humored.

Mike scoffed, "You're lucky you weren't named after the waffle itself."

Sam stared blankly at his father. "What about Sarah?" he asked.

Mike breathed heavily out of his nose, scratching the back of his head. Sarah was their daughter. El, when they first talked about having kids, suggested a sweet and heartfelt idea to Mike regarding a name. Sarah had been the name of Hopper's daughter. So after asking Hopper, they decided to name their daughter Sarah.

"Similar thing," Mike lied. But how could he not? It's not that they cared *less* about Sam and that's why he got the weirder, less-sentimental name. Although, with El and her Eggos, the sentiments of both names stand pretty close to her heart.

"You and Mom are so lame," Sam decided, standing up from his chair and walking out of the kitchen. If he had thought his dad was lying, he didn't question him.

"Hey, clean your plate up—and where are you going?" Mike called after him.

Sam reappeared, grabbing his plate and hurrying to put it in the sink. "I'm going to hang out with Madd and Ethan," he answered his dad, waving lazily as he walked out of the kitchen again.

"Have fun," Mike told him, standing up and picking up their plates to put in the sink.

He heard the front door open with a startled "whoa!"

"Hey Mom, sorry Mom," he heard Sam say in a rush before leaving and closing the door.

He could hear El sigh, giving a confused, "Goodbye," to the closed door. She walked into the kitchen where Mike was putting the dishes away. "Hey," she said softly, setting down her keys on the counter.

"Hey," Mike turned around, smiling and walking over to hug his wife. "Remind me why you were up so early this morning?"

"I *told* you," she said, feigning annoyance. "Max and I had a coffee thing," she said, adding, "And it's not that early. I only left at 8:30 and we were meeting at 9:00. It's almost 11:00, now."

Mike scoffed, squishing her into his chest, "That's early for a Saturday."

"You know, Max gave me that same lecture when we met up even though *she* was the one who organized it," El sighed, looking up at Mike. "How was your morning?" she asked.

Mike shrugged, "Good enough. Our son asked why we named him 'Sam.'"

El shifted under his arms, letting out a small giggle. "It's a good name, Mike," she said, standing on her tip toes and kissing just under his chin.

"Yes, but we named him after a frozen food, El. I can't help but think that's a bit..." Mike fumbled for the word. "Pathetic."

El gasped, lightly slapping his arm and grinning, "It's an honor to be named after something so amazing."

"You have an obsession. You need a twelve-step program," Mike said dryly as she wiggled out of his grasp.

"You're just jealous," she said simply.

Mike frowned, "I am *not* jealous of a frozen waffle, El."

"No, of course not," she said all too innocently. "Because that'd be..." she trailed off, tapping her chin in thought, "Pathetic." Her eyes landed on him and they seemed to dance with mischief.

Mike rolled his eyes, grabbing her arms carefully and dragging her back to him. Leaning against her he smirked. "Say it again, I dare you," he whispered, drawing close to her lips.

"Pathetic," she whispered, her smile not leaving her face.

He scoffed lightly, leaning forward and kissing her. It always felt so natural, the two of them. At the end of the day, they always knew they had each other's back, and that was all that mattered. It was as if they were one person sometimes, feeling completely understood no matter what. El sighed into the kiss, letting her fingers trail up his chest to grab his shirt gingerly in her hands.

"Hey Mom, Dad, I was wondering if—" Sarah cut-off and froze mid pose in the entryway of the kitchen.

Mike and El quickly separated, but remained close. El let out an airy laugh as she let her head fall against Mike's chest, hiding. Fighting a

blush, Mike stoically looked up from his wife, meeting his daughter's eyes. "Hm?"

Sarah stood there with her mouth open. Closing it, she peered at her parents with a look of mild disgust and subtle regret. "Never mind. I'm gonna go and burn my eyeballs out."

The married couple stood in silence as Sarah walked out of the kitchen and then out the front door. When they knew she was out of range they both started laughing. "At least she knows her parent's love each other," El giggled.

Mike smiled, letting out a hum of agreement before kissing his wife again. "And," he spoke between kisses, "By the way."

"Yes?"

"I'm not jealous of a waffle."

Catch you guys in my next update! I hope you enjoyed. :)

-LovelySheree

5. E

This is based on the idea that the kids *don't* know about the Upside-Down or the crazy things that happened to Eleven or that she has psychic abilities. Thus, it's only natural for Sam (son of Mike and El) to be a bit confused when he runs into his own powers.

Character Key:

Ethan: Dustin's son, 13 yrs. old.

Madison (Madd): Lucas and Max's daughter, 12 yrs. old.

Sam (Sammy): Mike and El's son, 13 yrs. old.

E is for **Exude**: discharge (moisture or a smell) slowly and steadily.

Sam Wheeler sat on the couch in his family's living room, staring blankly at the T.V. screen. There was a golden "1st" above Donkey Kong and a grey "2nd" above Captain Falcon.

"You're kidding me," he mumbled, slouching, "*Again?* How are you doing that?"

"What, winning?" Madison cackled, her dark, copper-brown, curly hair bouncing as she turned to face sam. "It's called being *skilled*, Sammy. You should try it."

"Oh, back off, will ya, Madd? I know you're better than me at Brawl, you don't have to rub it in. But how on earth are you beating me as *Donkey Kong*. He's actually rated as the worst player," Sam sighed, clicking the "A" button and returning to the main screen.

Madison scoffed teasingly, "That says something about your skill, doesn't it? I mean, I can literally wipe the floor with you as Donkey Kong." Noticing his frustration, she gave a semi-sympathetic smile. "Honestly, it's just because I own the game and play it a lot. It'd only make sense I'm a bit better. Not to mention you can't even dodge or use your smashes."

"It's not my fault the game's mental," Sam crossed his arms, tossing the wii-controller onto the cushion beside him.

"Wanna play something else?" Madison asked, turning herself on the couch so she could put her legs over the back and her head falling off the front, successfully sitting upside-down.

"Nah, I'm tired of looking at a screen," Sam sighed, looking at her strangely. "And why are you sitting like that?"

Madison's ice-blue eyes, contrasting against her dark, freckled face, flashed to meet his confused stare. "The world can be more interesting upside-down."

"Poetic," Sam replied sarcastically, but joined her none-the-less, sitting upside-down on the couch.

"It makes me dizzy," she laughed.

"Did you know that sitting upside-down for a long period helps you think better and can actually help relax you?" Sam asked, stating a random tidbit of trivia. "And it's only a myth that it'll make you pass-out."

"No, I did not. But I'm very glad that my brain will hold *that* bit of *very* useful information now instead of how to do basic algebra," Madison said sarcastically.

"I'm pretty sure you're head's big enough to store both that fact, and the concept of algebra. Besides, even if you can't, you can just flip upside-down and make yourself smarter—" Sam was cut off mid-sentence by the doorbell being pressed multiple times.

Flipping off the couch, he stumbled to the entryway, "I'm lightheaded," he mumbled, opening the door. "Ethan?" he looked confused.

Ethan burst through the door, "Guys, guys, you've *got* to come over to my house! My dad just got me Black Ops!"

Madison flipped off the couch and poked her head out to see into the entryway where Sam and Ethan stood. "Wait, seriously, Ethan?"

"As serious as a heart attack, you guys wanna come over and play it?" he asked excitedly.

"Hell ya!" Madison bounded to the door, "Sammy, what about you?"

"My parent's don't like shooter-games," Sam said lamely.

Ethan scoffed, "God, your parents are so protective, I swear. Dude, it's not that bad," he said, waving his hand dismissively, "Besides, what are you to them? Five?"

Sam shrugged, "I don't think it's me they're worried about so much as it is my Mom. She's got this thing against gunfire noises. I think she must have sensitive ears or something."

"So you wanna come?" Madison asked, already halfway out the door.

"Sure, why not?" he nodded, following them out the door.

"Speaking of, where *are* your parents?" Ethan asked curiously to Sam.

Sam nodded towards a house down the block, "They're at Madd's house."

"Come on, slowpokes! Get on your bikes and let's *go*!" Madison hurried them. Sam shook his head in exasperation, getting his bike that was plopped on the front lawn and swinging a leg over.

"First one to my house gets the bigger screen!" Ethan hollered, racing past Sam.

Madison zoomed after him, "You're on, Henderson!"

Sam watched his friends race forward as he peddled after them. "No fair, you guys got a head-start!" he yelled after them, trying desperately to catch up.

As if on command, a strong *something* seemed to push him forward. Freaked out, he squeezed his breaks and screeched to a stop. *What the hell?* he thought, staring at his bike in shock and looking behind him. Nothing was there. What was it?

He felt a warm liquid exude from his nose. Wiping his sleeve across his face he found a small streak of blood printed to his cuff. *My nose never bleeds*, he thought, wiping his face again, but all traces of blood seemed to be gone. Except the small stain on his shirt sleeve.

Snapping out of his daze, Sam looked up to find that both Madison and Ethan had gone on without him. Sighing in frustration, he peddled forward towards Ethan's house, but this time, slowly.

I realize "Exude" doesn't entirely fit this, but I wanted it to, alright? (If you wanna see pictures of what these kids look like, check out my Tumblr (lovelysheree)!

Hope you enjoyed! Let me know what you thought. :)

-LovelySheree

6. Bye-bye ABCs! (Habit)

So I *thought* the ABC-prompt would *help* me find inspiration, but I'm experiencing more frustration due to the limitations it brings. Sooo, I'm ixnay-ing that idea. This is just one-shots again.

Habit

"That's a weird habit of yours," El remembered hearing her English partner, Sonya, say to her. They were working on a project that involved a lot of concentration and it made El feel like her head was going to spin off or implode. Maybe even both.

"What?" She had questioned back, wondering what on earth this girl meant. *Habit? What's habit?* Was it a school material that she was using? Her eraser was a soft blue—and typically she noticed that they were pink—but El could've *sworn* they were called erasers.

"You keep wiping your nose when you've finished writing down a long question. Do you have allergies?" Sonya asked in seemingly innocent curiosity.

Allergies, now *that* was a word El *did* understand. It was the reason Mike always sneezed and Lucas always complained about his headaches. But *"habit?"* She still was a bit confused. Her *"habit"* was her wiping her nose? El didn't even know she did that. She settled on the safe answer and shrugged her shoulder to save herself from the embarrassment of not knowing a word.

"I dunno," she had said, going back to the question at hand. *"But shouldn't we finish this grammar assignment?"* she asked.

"You know, hanging out with those nerds is really rubbing off on you. You care too much about school-work," Sonya had complained, but went back to focusing on the in-class assignment without further pestering.

Now, El sat on the couch in the little bungalow that Hopper and her lived in, pondering over the word. Mike sat next to her—they going over their math homework together—and he lectured enthusiastically

about multiplying and dividing fractions.

"And when you divide, you have to keep in mind that a fraction is already two numbers being divided, so what you do is—"

"What does "habit" mean?" El asked, interrupting. She was still curious about the word.

Mike immediately stopped talking, giving her his full attention and setting their math temporarily aside. "Uhm, well. A habit is something someone does often and typically isn't required. There are *bad* habits, *good* habits, and habits that are just a thing you do but doesn't really effect anyone."

"There are... three kinds of habits?" she asked.

Mike shook his head, running a hand through his mop of a haircut and sighed, "No, no there aren't three habits. Um... okay so it's a noun, right?"

El nodded, they were even working with nouns in class that day. "A person, place or thing?" she asked.

"Yes—and a habit is a thing. It comes from the word *habitual* and that means to do something over and over again even without thinking about it. So like, brushing your teeth in the morning is an example of a good and healthy habit that everyone learns. Something like biting your nails or... I dunno, maybe cussing a ton, would be a bad habit. Make sense?" he asked.

El nodded, "My English partner said I have a habit," she said.

"Did she say what it was?" he leaned in looking her over, wondering if he could guess which habit it was.

She wiped her nose, "That."

"I mean, I understand *why* you do that habit, but I guess it'd be weird for someone who doesn't really know anything about you—"

"You know *why*?" She asked curiously.

"Well sure, your nose bleeds whenever you concentrate to lift something with your mind or go to the upside-down or whatever," Mike nodded knowingly. "So now your brain tells you to wipe your nose even if you're just concentrating on a task that doesn't involve telekinesis. It's just wired itself to wipe your nose."

"Oh," El said rather lamely. "Is it a bad one?" she asked carefully, wondering if she had been doing something wrong.

Mike shook his head, "No way! It doesn't effect anyone, and if anyone thinks it's a bad habit, then they're just mouth breathers. Besides," he avoided her eyes and rubbed his neck nervously. "I-I think it's kinda cute."

El seemed to almost gleam at him, "You think it's cute?"

"Hey! I'm-I'm your *boyfriend*. I'm allowed to think what you do is cute," he defended himself, his face growing redder and redder by the second.

She laughed, closing her eyes and falling sideways on the couch, holding a pillow to her stomach. "Wiping my nose is *cute* to you?" she asked incredulously, "What, are allergies some weird turn-on for you?"

Mike's face almost morphed into a tomato and he picked up the nearest pillow and chucked it at her, "Gross, that's not what I meant!" He picked up the math book and set it resolutely in his lap. "And how do you know what turn-on means but don't know what habit means?" he asked under his breath.

She shrugged, "Hopper," she answered, peering over to look at the book. "Sorry, let's finish math."

He smiled at her and kissed her cheek, "Right... so *dividing fractions* —"

Hope you enjoyed! Leave a comment and/or request a theme or prompt for the next chapter... I'm just all over the place, okay?

-LovelySheree

7. Chapter 7

Age: Seniors in high school (17-18 years old)

Randomly feeling angsty so I just started writing. There's no real plot... just this and a sappy ending per usual :P

"Why don't you just tell me what you think!?" He knew his voice was a bit too loud. He knew it just make things worse—yelling never worked with her, she would just yell back and storm off—but at this point he was so frustrated that he didn't care. She had been sitting on the couch in his living room (thank *god* his parents and little sister were both out of the house tonight) for way too long, and no matter how he tried to fix it, she just—she did *nothing*.

She sighed, rubbing the bridge of her nose with tightly shut eyes, "Mike, *please*—"

"I feel so *useless* like this," he cut her off, running a hand tightly through his hair, "but if you'd just *tell* me, then maybe—"

"Mike, you don't get it, I can't—"

"But if you *told* me, then I *would* get it! But since you just keep sitting there in silence, I'll never know! I'll *never* know!" He could hear a ringing in his ears, his heart pounded in his chest. Whether it was fear or anger at this point, he didn't know.

She looked up at him, finally meeting his eyes. Hers were cold. Decided. Resolute. A rueful understanding. "You probably won't," she said, so evenly, so calmly that Mike feared the freezing fire that laid beneath the surface of her words.

He stood there, holding her eyes. His heart skipping and his ears still ringing, his hands still sweaty, his mind still spinning. "How come?" was all he asked. He felt so defeated.

"I can't... just *tell* you. If it were that simple, then I would've done it *years* ago, Mike, but it's not!" she hissed between her teeth in an

attempt to keep her voice level and to keep her powers in check. "I physically can't tell you, I can't form the words, I can't make sense of it either, I *can't just tell you!*"

"Can you at least *try*?" he asked desperately.

"You think I *haven't*?" she asked, and something switched. He could *feel* the air buzz—and it wasn't a good buzz. The lightbulbs flickered, the floor momentarily shook beneath them as she stood up and stormed towards him.

"I assumed you thought better of me than that," she seethed. "But you're right. I'm sorry I can't figure this shit out! I'm sorry that, no matter how 'perfect' my new family is, something's still off for some dumb reason and I feel *terribly* guilty about it! I'm sorry that my situation is *so messed up* that I can't even talk to anyone who knows shit about anything like an actual therapist because the FBI will *hunt me down* and try and use me as some sort of *weapon*! And I'm sorry that even though I can literally see anyone no matter where they are, that I can lift cars and freight trains with my *mind*, I still feel so *powerless* and—and...and *scared* and I don't know why!"

He saw tears brimming in the corners of her eyes, he saw her jaw clench and nose scrunch. It wasn't often he saw this face. In fact, Mike was almost positive this was the first time he had seen El like this *ever*.

She took in a short and shaky breath, pointing a finger and poking him squarely in the chest. "You have *some* nerve," she said, pushing him with her finger and causing him to stagger backwards.

Oh, the thought hit him like a icy cold wave. She was confused. She *hated* being confused. It riled her up to no end, and to think she had been confused about these things for so long... Mike couldn't even imagine the frustration she must feel.

He watched as she turned around and sat back down on the couch, closing her eyes and breathing evenly. It was an exercise that Will had taught her to do to calm down, something he had found to be quite helpful in his years of constant anxiety.

"El..." he said, inching forward. "I...I'm sorry. I just get so... angry when I can't help. I makes me feel so useless and—and *unworthy* I guess. But I didn't think about why you weren't telling me—why you *couldn't* tell me," he said, sitting down by her and gently laying his arm around her shoulders. She nearly immediately leaned into him, falling onto his shoulder.

They were quiet for a while, simply sitting with each other and their freshly uncovered emotions.

"I'm really sorry," he said again, breaking the silence and leaning down to kiss her forehead.

"Mm, we're breaking up," she mumbled sarcastically, "It's too late, Mike. Let's face it, we've grown apart."

"Well, we had a good run at least, didn't we?" he asked, playing along.

She shrugged, "I mean... I *guess*." She leaned up to look at him, moving so that her head was level with his. "I'm sorry too," she said sincerely. "I should've at least expressed my confusion," she said, reaching to hold his face and lightly kiss him.

He smiled, kissing her again and letting his hands wander to her hips. "I think I can look past it," he said between kisses.

She laughed against his lips, her arms wrapping themselves around his neck as she leaned backwards onto the couch, pulling him with her.

For the second time that night, Mike was *very* grateful his parents and little sister were gone for the evening.

Hope you enjoyed! Please leave a review :)

8. Long Distance

The following one-shots are going to be in celebration of Mileven week!

The first prompt is Long Distance, so here you guys go!

Long Distance

He wasn't saying it was great, but it had gotten easier. He had a comforting routine, a daily schedule bringing a needed consistency to his life. Yes, the mundanes of college and work were oddly settling.

Settling... the word felt bitter and weighed heavy on his mind. His parents had settled, and perhaps he finally understood *why* now that he was an adult himself and dealing with the stresses of life, but that didn't mean he liked that word. He *hated* that word. He *hated* what it had done to his family. He didn't want to grow up and find settling... well, *settling*. Yet here he was, appreciating his neutral colored apartment walls and his very convenient parking spot. Just the other day he had been so excited because there was a pots and pans sale at the nearby general store!

He missed his exciting childhood. Well, maybe he didn't miss *all* of it. The interdimensional catastrophe, otherwise known as the Upside-down, featuring deadly aliens and genetically modified super-powered humans was probably a bit much. Although he didn't mind a few of those things (one super-powered girl in particular).

El. That thought alone made his heart squeeze. He *missed* her. He really, *really* missed her. He missed their spontaneous adventures, the excitement of the unknown, and the shocking, *unsettling* inconsistencies of their time together. He felt so much more colorful around her, and he'd be lying if he said a small part of him wasn't scared of getting caught up in the normalcies of adult life. Would he wake up one day and forget the thrill of the unknown? Would he suddenly find himself perfectly content with the steady rhythm of the day-to-day?

He hoped not.

His fingers were rapidly tapping on his desk as he stared at his blank biology paper. *Oh right*, he thought, letting out a long sigh through his nose, *homework*. But he couldn't focus on homework right now. He could only focus on *her*. He knew this was inevitable, he knew there was no avoiding it. Long distance *sucked*.

Because Mike Wheeler was hopelessly in love with his girlfriend and he hadn't seen her in *months*.

Just wait until Thanksgiving, he mentally told himself, glancing at the calendar on his bedroom wall. It was the middle of November—just one more week until he'd see her.

He ignored his biology assignment on his desk, leaning back in his chair and running a hand through his hair. He had left his bowl-cut hairdo behind his first day of Freshman year in college, keeping it long, but using a pinch of gel to help it sweep up and out of his face. It wasn't fancy—nothing like what Steve or Dustin would do (he'd die of embarrassment)—but it was definitely a step up from his high school self.

Maybe I should call her, he thought, getting up from his desk and walking out of his apartment room. It was just before dinner time, she didn't have any late classes, and it was a Wednesday evening. She'd be free to talk, right?

He walked over to the phone that sat just outside of the small kitchen and dialed a number he was all-too familiar with.

After a few buzzes, Mike was heard a female voice abruptly answer the phone. "*Yeah*," she spoke flatly.

"Kim—" Mike began but was cut off.

"*Ah-ah, try again.*"

"...Tracy?" he tried, letting his head fall against the wall in mild frustration. Both of El's roommates, Kim and Tracy, were pretty lively and consistently found ways to keep him from talking with his girlfriend. He lost count of how many times his question of, "can I

talk to El?" lead to some other very random and very long conversation. He knew they did it just to mess with him, but that doesn't mean he still didn't get annoyed.

"The one and only, Mikey," Mike groaned at the nickname, but if Tracy heard it, she didn't acknowledge it. *"Yeah, Kim's gone right now, so obviously she couldn't answer the phone. Besides, don't you know my voice already, lover-boy?"*

"Bad connection?" Mike knew the excuse was shit, but he didn't care. "Is El there by chance?" he asked.

"Jane? Yeah, she's—she's... somewhere in here—jaNE! JANE, THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE IS CALLING YOU!" Mike winced as he quickly took the phone away from his ear before slowly and cautiously bringing it back.

"Don't you guys live in a small apartment? Doesn't that mean you *don't* have to yell that loud?" Mike asked, closing his eyes and letting out a short breath.

"Oh shut-up," she said dryly.

"You're the one who was yelling—"

"Mike? Hey, what's up? Why are you calling?" whatever insult he had playfully prepared for Tracy was completely lost when he heard her voice. *El.*

"Hey," he greeted, smiling even though she couldn't see him. Not that he could help it, anyway.

"Hi..." she responded slowly, after a beat of silence she continued, *"Why are you calling? Is something wrong?"*

Mike shook himself out of his miniature daze, "O-oh, um, no. No, nothing's wrong. I just... wanted to call you, is all," he said lamely.

"Oh," he heard her giggle from the other side of the line and just *wished* he could see her smile. *Just one more week,* he reminded himself.

"I just," he found himself at a loss for words and all he could do was focus on the dead-weight of *longing* he had in his gut. "I just miss you."

"I do too," he heard her sigh, "But there's only one more week and then we'll see each other. And the rest of the party—Max said that she's going to Lucas' for Thanksgiving this year since her parents moved out of Hawkins."

Mike smiled, a Thanksgiving with friends and family sounded *wonderful*. A day full of great food and even greater people was all he wanted at this moment. Especially since he'll be with El. "Nancy called me the other day and mentioned that she and Johnathan will be at Thanksgiving this year, too. Sounds like everyone will be in town this time," he smiled. Being in his junior year of college, it was often that his friends or family would have different breaks or different schedules which meant it was rare for everyone to be in the same place.

"I'm sooo looking forward to your mother's turkey," El said and Mike could practically hear her smile through the phone.

He scoffed, "Well, if there's one thing she's good at, it's cooking," he said, only half meaning it.

"Both Joyce and Hop are terrible cooks, so I savor every meal from your mother," she said with a wistful sigh. *"I'm most excited to see you, though,"* she admitted.

"Me too. It feels like this month is never going to end," Mike said, leaning up from the wall and taking a seat at the little dining table he had set up. In the entire time he's lived in this apartment with his two roommates, he's 100% positive they've never actually used this dining table. The only time it was used was with his conversations with El.

"Yeah, it feels like forever," she agreed. And she was right. Mike and El had typically arranged to visit each other by now. They were five hours away from each other which meant they'd go and visit one another whenever there was a long weekend. But this semester had been complete hell for both of them. For some reason the classes were just harder and the teachers were more strict. Any free weekend

was used for studying or working on projects. It truly, miserably, unrelentingly felt like *forever* since they had last seen each other.

"So what have you been up to?" he asked her, leaning back in the chair he sat in.

"*Nothing really,*" she said at first before gasping lightly, "*Oh! You wouldn't believe what one of my classmates did during psychology!*" she rushed out, ready to tell him every detail of the situation.

He smiled, listening to her voice and her excitement. Long distance sucked, it *really* did. But they made it work. These little moments of hearing her talk and giving in to the pleasantries of conversation with his girlfriend was enough. The small bits of the unexpected they would find throughout their day and share with one another was good for now. Because soon he'd be with her. *Just one more week...*

"So what did they do?" he asked, grinning as he listened to her story.

**Hope you enjoyed! Stay tuned for the next updates this week!
Next prompt is "Fate."**

9. Fate

Another day another prompt for Mileven Week! Thanks for everyone who's been keeping up with these one shots! Sorry this post is late (Wednesdays are busy for me...) but it's here now!

Fate

"Do you believe in fate?" Dustin asked the party while they were walking to classes one morning. It was the third day of their freshman year of high school and an odd mixture of excitement for the weekend and exasperation for only being *halfway through the week* had settled in the air. And this was only the beginning of the school year! So Dustin's question came as a bit of a surprise.

"Where the hell is that kind of question coming from, Dustin?" Lucas asked, snorting dismissively.

Dustin leaned to shove Lucas, but Lucas was already ready to shove back. "Where'd it come from? Unlike you and half the other brain-dead kids out there, *I* actually think about complicated things."

"Dustin, not five minutes ago you *pushed* the door to the school when it said '*pull*.' In big bold letters, mind you, and right where your hands were," Mike pointed out dryly, adjusting his backpack.

Dustin scoffed, "Ah, yes. But you see, that was a very *simple* thing and I said I think about *complicated* things."

Will snickered, "He's got a point."

Dustin nodded his agreement, "As I usually do, Will, as I usually do." He looked at the party expectantly, but they didn't seem to catch what his look meant. "So?" he pushed, "Do you guys believe in fate or not?"

"I don't know," Lucas said incredulously, "My only concern is my homework right now."

"I'm not sure if it's *fate* I believe in... but I do believe that some things

are just out of our control," Will answered honestly with a shrug.

They turned to Mike, and he felt their gazes on him like glaring sunlight on tired eyes. He looked at them with his eyebrows raised, unamused. "Seriously?" he asked them, unsure why they were suddenly digging into this topic on the way to their first period of the day. "No," he answered simply.

"'No' as in 'no I don't believe in fate' or 'no' as in 'no I don't want to answer the question,'?" Dustin asked, walking backwards now and in front of the party.

"Is it possible for it to mean both?" Mike sighed.

"Jeez, *someone's* got their panties in a wad toda—whoa!" Dustin suddenly stumbled backwards in a desperate attempt to avoid colliding with a girl who was trying to walk past.

It all happened in a blur of rapid moments. Dustin tripped backwards, narrowly missing the girl, while she stumbled forwards with a startled yelp, hands outstretched and ready to brace her fall while her books began to tumble to the floor. But she never hit the ground. Instead, she fell right into Mike's arms.

Mike blinked in confusion while his hands that had coincidentally found their way to her hips quickly moved to her shoulders. "You okay?" he asked as she gingerly stepped back from him and he gently let go of her.

"I'm fine. Sorry about that," she said softly, and Mike could see that she was blushing, though he was positive he was no better in that department at the moment. It *is* slightly embarrassing to fall into someone who you don't know—or to have someone who you don't know fall onto *you*, for that matter.

"Don't apologize, my friend was the one who made you fall so—" his voice caught in his throat as he met her eyes, her warm brown eyes framed by wavy chestnut hair. She was *gorgeous*. "—N-no hard feelings," he finished lamely.

She smiled brightly, "I'm glad. I'd hate to make enemies the first week

of school." Mike's heart nearly stopped when he saw her smile. *Pretty*, he couldn't help but think. "And I'd hate to give the wrong impression; I normally don't fling myself at boys I've only just met."

She began to bend down, reaching out to pick up her books, and Mike followed suit. It was only polite, after all. "Here, let me help you with that," he offered, picking up one of her books. Briefly looking at the cover of one of the textbooks, he was surprised to find it read, *Advanced Algebra*.

"You're taking Advanced Algebra? What period?" he asked, handing her the book.

"Third. Are you taking it?" she asked, taking the book and adding it to the small stack that had once again gathered neatly in her arms.

He smiled, feeling oddly giddy for some reason. "Yeah, I'm in third period too," he said, standing up and holding out a hand for her to take. She took it carefully and stood up.

"I guess I'll see you there...?" she trailed off, wordlessly asking for his name.

"Mike," he said.

"Mike," she echoed softly, "I'm El."

"El," Mike said, her name numbly spilling from his lips. *Nice to meet you*, he tried to say, but words seemed to have gotten lost between his thoughts and execution.

There was a moment of silence that should've felt awkward but didn't. "Well, then. I guess I'll see you in third period, Mike," she said, smiling and moving past him.

"Yeah," he said, watching her leave.

Mike had completely forgotten the rest of the party's existence until he heard them all snickering. "Well, boys, I believe Mike would like to change the answer to his question," Dustin grinned.

"Excuse me?" Mike turned back around, glaring at him.

Lucas cackled, "Mike Wheeler and his *fateful encounter*," he said mockingly, clasping his hands together for effect, "It was love at first sight."

Mike groaned in annoyance. "Shut-up, asshole, I was just helping her pick up her books."

"And that's probably all you'll *ever* get to do," Dustin added, "'Cause, *damn*, she is way out of your league."

Mike begrudgingly shifted his backpack on his shoulder and began his trek to his first class once again. Dustin was right, she—*her name was El*, he remembered—was way out of his league. He didn't really believe in that whole scale of beauty thing, but she wasn't just attractive by social standards. Sure she was pretty (there were a lot of pretty girls out there), but she was... different. She was *bright*. She was *kind*. She was... quite seemingly *perfect*.

Then again, he had *just* met the girl and she probably will have forgotten his name by the time third period comes. He let a low, frustrated growl loose from his throat. This was very unlike him—he needed to get under control. *After all*, he ruefully thought, *She's just another girl*. But he knew he was only lying to himself.

Inevitably, third period rolled around and Mike said goodbye to Dustin, Will, and Lucas. They all shared their first two classes together (english and geology), but they all had different classes for third and fourth period before meeting up again in fifth and sixth. Dustin and Will headed towards the arts section of the school, Will having a drawing class and Dustin having drama. Lucas made his way, begrudgingly, towards his government class and Mike nervously walked towards the advanced algebra classroom.

Mike shook his head, gripping the straps of his backpack tightly. He didn't know why he let himself get so caught up in thinking of her. Her being someone he barely even *knew*. She was a complete stranger! And yet he kept thinking about the sound of his name when it softly left her lips. The hopeful light in her eyes when she had asked if he was taking the same class as her. The unspoken promise that seemed to pass between them: *I'll see you again*.

Mike sighed heavily. Clearly he had been imagining things, and not because she was "out of his league" as Dustin had so kindly put it. No, he must be imagining things because people don't meet like that. There's never an instantaneous connection, an immediate kinship—

"Love at first sight," he heard Lucas' voice mockingly echo in the back of his mind.

Right. There was no such thing. So *why* was his brain so wrapped around that single moment? Mike could feel the storm of emotions swirling in his chest and he couldn't seem to shove them down. So he distractedly walked into his advanced algebra class, half-heartedly looking for a *certain someone*, and sitting down at the first available desk when he didn't see her.

"Mike," she had said, *"I'm El,"* he replayed the conversation in his head, grabbing his textbook and notebook out of his backpack and setting them down on his desk. *El*, he wondered what it was short for...

"This desk isn't taken, is it?" a voice pulled him from his thoughts. He looked up from his notebook and was surprised to find none other than *her* standing in front of him, gesturing to the desk to his left.

He shook his head, "I—uh, no. No, it's empty."

She smiled, setting down her back pack and sitting at the desk. "Mike, right?" she turned to him with a questioning glance.

"Yeah. And you're El, right?" he responded, not that he needed her reassurance. He was almost positive that her name had been burned into the back of his mind the moment she introduced herself.

"That's me," she replied, setting down her own notebook on her desk. She briefly looked around the room before settling back down in her chair, "This class is pretty small," she observed.

Mike shrugged, "I guess not too many people are 'mathletes,'" he said, quoting the air with his fingers.

El nodded, "I guess not," she sighed, "I had no choice. I was homeschooled growing up and all my dad was good at was numbers,

so... I really had nothing else to learn."

"Your dad's good at math, huh? So's mine... must be in the genes," Mike mused aloud. He eyed the girl sitting next to him curiously... why hadn't he seen her before this? Had she missed the first few days of school? She'd said it herself, this was a small class, there's no way he would've missed her.

Although, he had a sneaking suspicion that the size of the class isn't what would've helped him notice her.

"So... I haven't seen you before," Mike started, and after receiving a strange look from her, he clarified. "Around school," he gestured to the classroom, "Or in this class."

"I had to miss the first few days of school," she admitted, "So this is my first day." She turned to him and smiled softly, almost in a silent invitation. Into what, however, Mike did not know. But he *really* wanted to. "First day of school *ever* actually. I'm about as fresh as any freshman comes."

Mike's eyes widened, "No way, you've never been to school before? *Ever?*"

"I told you I was homeschooled," she said, giving him a wry look.

Mike's cheeks grew pink in embarrassment, "I assumed you only meant in elementary school." He scratched the back of his neck, a nervous gesture his sister always teased him about, "Well, welcome to school then... not gonna lie, it's pretty lame. Some of the clubs are nice, though."

"Well, the people seem nice too," she said, and he could've *sworn* he heard a hidden lilt, a subtle hint, beneath her words.

Before he could respond, however, the teacher came in. "Alright class, please quiet down and I'll start with attendance—Ah, miss Hopper, it's nice to meet you finally, I hope you don't have trouble catching up with where we are."

Mike turned to El as the teacher spoke to her. *Hopper*, he thought, *El Hopper*.

"I'll do my best," she responded, smiling politely, albeit nervously.

The class went by relatively quickly, and Mike couldn't help but notice that El didn't seem to have any trouble keeping up with their curriculum. Granted, it *was* only the third day of the school year. And before he knew it, the bell rang and it was time for lunch.

Finally, Mike thought, noticing just how hungry he was.

"Lunch time?" he hear El ask from behind him as he grabbed his things and shoved them into his backpack.

"Yeah," he said, swiveling around to look at her. She nodded at his answer, but it felt like there was something else she was trying to ask.

"Do...do you know where the cafeteria is?" he asked, "If you don't, I can show you where it is. You can even sit with me and my friends—but they're all guys and they're pretty dumb sometimes. Actually... you know what, maybe you don't want to—not that you *can't*, I wouldn't mind—"

"—Mike," she cut him off, reaching out and touching his arm gently. "I'd appreciate that. I don't know where the cafeteria is so it'd be a big help. I can't tell you how many times I've got turned around in here already."

Mike smiled, all gooey and smily at her response. "Okay... yeah..." he slung his backpack on his shoulder, "Off to the cafeteria, then."

"Lead the way," she grinned, following him out of the classroom.

Mike never knew he could be so thankful for Dustin's clumsiness. Because here he was, walking down the hall with this amazing girl, and she even had the heart to talk with him. And it felt so *right*. So *natural*. So...

"*Love at first sight*," he hear Lucas' voice, yet again.

And he couldn't help but agree.

Hope you guys enjoyed! Hopefully I'll be able to post something

for tomorrow ;D. Today really set me back a few steps.

10. Moving in Together

Sorry for the lack of updates on the previous prompts, but I didn't have many ideas for them so I decided against writing them. But I hope you enjoy this little short one-shot!

Moving in Together

"Dad, really, it was kind of you to help, but you should probably let yourself rest," El fretted over Hopper as he wheezed, hoisting up a large box.

"Kid, I'm not that old," he said huffed, his face blocked by cardboard.

El sighed, "I'm not referring to you *age*," she said pointedly, "You *just* had knee surgery—unless you somehow *forgot* about being shot in the leg," she added flatly.

He snorted, fumbling with the box so that he could see where he was walking. "It's not like it's the first time that's happened," he scoffed.

"*Really* not helping your case," she said, grabbing a box herself and following him into the house.

Her house. *Their* house. As she walked through the door, she spared a quick glance at Mike who was sorting through a box in the living room and smiled. In a few days she was going to marry that man, and that thought alone made her absolutely *giddy*. However, not giddy enough to forget about her very stubborn father.

"You should sit down," she said as she set the box she had been carrying next to the one Hopper had just set on the dining room table.

Hopper crossed his arms, leveling her a stern look that she had gotten so used to over the years. "The surgery was over a month ago—"

"—And it'll take *years* to heal—"

"—I feel *fine*, kid—"

"—Of course you feel *fine*, you've lost most of the nerves in your knee from the wound! It's *numb*, but that doesn't mean you aren't straining it," she gestured to his knee.

"I'm not straining it," he said, walking past her and back through the front door, "Besides, the doctor said I'll need to exercise with it."

El watched him walk out the front door with a tight frown on her face. She walked into the living room to still see Mike sorting out boxes. "Where's Joyce? I need her to talk some sense into him," she spoke mostly to herself, under breath and exasperatingly airy. But Mike heard her and responded anyway, looking up from the box and giving her a strange look.

"You're going to tattletale on your father?" he asked.

El crossed her arms, "I am."

"On his wife?" his eyebrows raised in mild disbelief.

"Yes," El nodded resolutely.

Before either of them could say anything else, they heard a loud yell sound from the front yard, making both of them jump. "Jim Hopper, I swear to *all that is holy*, if you mess up that knee before it's properly healed—"

"Joyce, I'm *fine*—"

"Oh no you're *not*! We are *not* paying for another surgery, sit down somewhere and make yourself of use."

Mike snickered, standing up and walking towards El. "Looks like you won't have to," he says, wrapping an arm around her and kissing her head.

She sighed. "He's too stubborn," she said in mild anger, already relaxing in Mike's embrace.

"Says the pot calling the kettle black," he gives her a wry smile.

She laughs through her nose, a small and surrendering smile plays at

her lips. "You better not say that to the women you're moving in with," she pointed out teasingly.

"Hey, I admire your strength. It's just another reason to love you," he amends, pulling her closer to him.

"That's better," she hums, leaning up and kissing underneath his chin. "Besides, you're equally as stubborn."

Suddenly they heard someone stumbling down the hallway and they both flick their heads towards the noise. There they find Dustin walking down the hall with a heavy looking box in his arms.

"Can one of you lend me a hand," he wheezed from behind the box, "This one's especially heavy—" he stopped mid-sentence as the box carefully floated from his arms and onto the kitchen table. He stared wide-eyed at the box before slowly bringing his gaze to El. "You know, I don't think I'll ever get used to you doing stuff like that."

"Neither will I," Mike added, "And I'm the one marrying her."

El escaped Mike's hold and walked over to the box she had floated to the kitchen table in such a casual manner that it left Mike and Dustin semi-flabbergasted. "Dustin, this is the kitchenware, right?" she asked, as if nothing had happened.

"Uh—uh, yeah, yep, it is," he responded numbly.

"I'll probably have my dad sort through this," she mused.

"I'll let him know, I'm getting another box anyway. Will and I already finished sorting out most of the stuff in the hall closet." Dustin said, walking out of the house.

Mike walked over to El and hugged her from behind, "You're pretty amazing you know that?" he asked, smiling down at her even though she couldn't see him.

"Are you only saying that because I made a box float with my mind?" she asked dryly, opening the box and double checking if it was the kitchenware.

"No," he replied honestly, "Although, I'd be lying if I said that didn't make you awesome."

She turned in his arms, leaning up and gently bringing his face down to hers and kissing him gently. "You are too," she said, all smily and practically oozing out a bubbly happiness. She leaned up and kissed him again, this time letting it linger as they both let out a content sigh.

They heard an annoyed knock at the door and they pulled apart, El peeking behind Mike and Mike turning around to see Hopper standing in the doorway. "If you two are gonna be like that, I'd rather bust my knee again and be stuck listening to Joyce about it," he said flatly.

"Dad," El said, maneuvering around Mike (being previously trapped against him and the kitchen table.) "I need you to sort out the kitchen stuff. Just separate the silverware and the plates and bowls."

He sighed, walking towards the kitchen and taking a seat at the table, "Sure thing, kid."

She smiled, "Thanks," and gave Mike a quick kiss on the cheek before walking outside to grab another box.

Mike smiled as he watched her leave, happy to know that this was *their* house they were moving into. Happy that this was *their* life they were about to start together. Happy, oh so very happy, that he would get to spend every second with such a beautiful, amazing, stubborn women.

Hope you enjoyed! Leave your thoughts down below :) Follow this story for more one-shots to come!

11. Chapter 11

Long time no see!

I have a prompt list on my tumblr page (lovelysheree) where you can ask for prompts and I'll write it when I have the time. Feel free to head over to my tumblr and check out the prompt list and ask me. (plus you can check out my fanart while you're at it ;))

Prompt 11 - "Why don't we kiss like that?"

The question had been sitting on the tip her tongue for a while now. During every conversation, during any quiet moment—every waking moment of the past two days—El had been close to tipping over and spilling. She *really* wanted to know, but the question felt very odd to ask. No, odd was the wrong word. Weird? Awkward? Yes, *awkward*.

It all started when she and her friends went to the movie theater. The movie was hard for El to follow (something about a teenage boy and an old man going somewhere?), but she enjoyed it nonetheless. When they finished the movie, they had all gathered at the entrance of the theater where they had parked their bikes. El waited for Mike to stand his up and stabilize so she could ride on the back.

Over the hustle and quiet drone of their conversation, she heard Dustin groan. "*God*, do they have to be so *public*?" he asked.

El saw Mike whip his head towards Dustin with a sour look of annoyance. "*Hey*, El's still learning how to ride a bike! I'm just giving her a ride—"

"No not *you* lovebirds," Dustin waved off Mike. "*Them*," he gestured towards the outside wall of the theater.

El turned to see what Dustin was referring to, her eyes wide-open and curious, and then she saw it. Two older teens leaned against the wall, kissing. But not just normal kissing. *Kissing like the movies*, El thought, her eyebrows raised as they scanned the scene before her. She had

seen this kissing before. This was the kind of kissing that happened on the shows she'd watch. The kind of kissing that made her heart race for a reason she didn't really understand. But she thought that kind of kissing was *just* in the movies, *just* in her shows, it wasn't *real*. Hopper said it himself, the TV she watches was just for entertaining, it was like the movie they just watched—it doesn't ever happen in real life.

But here she was, *witnessing it*. Witnessing the kind of kissing that she would think about. The kind of kissing that seemed thrilling and exciting. The kind of kissing that set her skin on fire somehow. The kind of kissing that was—

"Gross," Mike mumbled from beside her. She turned to see him fumbling with his kickstand and straightening out his bike. His cheeks were dusted a shade of pink, his eyebrows knitted together. *Oh...* she thought soberly, *gross*. El quietly watched as the rest of the group hopped onto their bikes, some laughing at Dustin's outburst, other's grumbling their agreements. *The kind of kissing that was gross*, she thought. She felt her stomach drop and her chest deflate, *Gross*, she repeated. She slid onto the back of Mike's bike, and in a blur, the night had ended.

And now El sat on the edge of the edge of the table in Mike's basement, two days later. She was keeping him company as he worked on the newest campaign for another Dungeons and Dragons playthrough. As she watched, the question *plagued* her. It practically taunted her as it sat behind her lips just ready to burst out at any moment. She picked at her finger beds nervously while the words swirled rapidly inside her mind. *Why don't we kiss like that?*

"Hey, can I run this idea by you? It's—" Mike began, looking up from the paper he was scribbling ideas down on, although El barely noticed. "El?" he asked again, worryingly curious.

She hummed a response, turning to give him a small smile.

"You seemed distracted," he observed, looking down at his paper and then back at El. A sudden look of panicked understanding flashed across his face. "Oh, shit—I'm sorry, you're probably bored! I, uh, I can stop working on this now, we can do something else if you want.

God El, I'm so sorry I just got swept up in the campaign and all and I didn't even *think* that you probably don't wanna waste your time down here with me just *watching* me write—"

"—Why don't we kiss?" she blurted out. For the record, she hadn't been *planning* on asking that, not now at least. But it had been under her tongue for so long that when she opened her mouth to tell Mike to calm down, that she *wanted* to be here, that she *wasn't* bored but just distracted, well... it just toppled right out.

Mike recoiled, dropping his pencil and looking away from her. His face looked heated, pink and rosy and embarrassed. "W-what do you mean, El? I—we—um... we *kiss*. We, uh, we just don't do it, um, all the time b-because it's inappropriate. Remember what Hopper said?" Mike asked, fidgeting nervously in his chair. El *did* remember what Hopper said, but that's not what she meant.

She sighed, she had asked it all wrong. "No, I don't mean kissing, I mean kissing like..." she crossed her arms tightly over her chest, suddenly nervous. "I mean the kind of kissing that's," she paused, remembering everyone's response that night to the couple. *The kind of kissing that's gross*, she told herself.

With a sigh, she gave him a strained smile. "Nevermind, I'm just being... stupid."

Mike shook his head, "You're not stupid, El."

They sat there in a pocket of silence. She felt Mike train his gaze back onto her, but she kept her eyes focused on the ground. She felt Mike reach out towards her and grab her hand. The movement was slow, gentle, and intentional. "You mean, um," he starts, but then pulls his hand back and holds it in his lap. "You mean the kind of kissing the couple outside of the theater was, uh..." he cleared his throat, "you mean *that* kind of kissing?"

She looked at him and steeled herself. Yes, she almost groaned out, but nodded instead.

"Well, that kind of kissing is..." Mike runs a nervous hand down his face and then behind his head to scratch his neck. "It's, well it's—"

"Gross?" El asked, worried her feeling of disappointment and shame would leak through her words.

Mike jolted up, "Gross? Not exactly... it's just, I mean. I guess it can be gross to *watch*. But kids like us, uh, we don't kiss like that. It's not—it's just not smart."

"Kids like us?" El echoed.

"Yeah. Only older people kiss like that. It's a different kind of kissing that can... lead to other things," Mike said, trying to suggest something larger that El didn't quite understand.

"*Other* things?" she echoed him again.

Mike nodded quickly, "Y-yeah, *other* things that we aren't suppose to do yet and—and this is *not* a question I can answer."

El's eyes suddenly lit up in understanding, "*Oh*," she nodded, "Like sex."

El heard a strangled squeak escape Mike as his head fell to the table.

Hope you enjoyed! If you'd like to request a prompt, head over to my tumblr page lovelysheree and ask.

-LovelySheree